

rest were staring at us as people stare at men passing to the scaffold.

Even Don Pedro, wide awake now, sat up in his hammock and peered with his heavy eyes while the Indian girl, Luisa, sat on the bed and watched our departure with some such face as mourners watch the outpouring of a corpse. All this I noted in a moment as I crossed the threshold and went forward down the passage, and as I went I shivered, for the scene was uncanny and fearful.

Presently we were in the abbots' chamber over the place, and I had locked the door behind us. Near the washstand, on which burned a single candle, sat in the neck of a bottle, salt, his face buried in his hands.

"Have they brought you no supper that you look so sad?" asked the senior.

"The woman Luisa gave to eat," he answered. "Listen, lord, and you, senior Strickland, our fears are well founded; this is a plot to murder us tonight; of this the woman is sure, for she heard some words pass between Don Pedro and a white man called Smith; also she saw one of the half-breeds fetch some spades from the garden and plant them in the ground, and which spades are to be used in the burrowing of our graves beneath this floor."

Now when we heard this our hearts sank, for it is terrible to think that we were doomed within some few hours to lie beneath the ground whereon our living feet were resting. Yet if these accusations were detected, our lives and our lives seemed certain, seeing that we had only knives wherewith to defend ourselves, for though we had saved the pistol and some powder in a flask, the damp had reached it during the shipwreck, so that it could not be relied upon.

"I am afraid we have been too venturesome in coming here," I said, "and that unless we can escape at once, we must be prepared to pay the price of our folly with our lives."

"Do not be downcast, lord," said Molina, "for you have not heard all the tale. The woman has shown me a means whereby we can save ourselves from death, at any rate, until morning. Come here," and leading us across the room he knelt upon the floor upon a spot almost opposite the picture of the abbots, and pressed upon a panel in the low wainscoting of cedar wood with which the wall was clothed to a height of about three feet.

The panel slid aside, leaving a space barely wide enough for a man to creep through this opening we crept one by one, and passed down four narrow steps to find ourselves in a chamber which I have never seen since. The walls, so small, that there was only just room for the three of us to stand in it, our heads being some inches above the level of the floor.

And here I may tell you, senior Jones, that though I have never shown it to you, this place still exists, as you may discover by searching the wainscoting. For many years I have used it for the safe keeping of papers and valuables. There, by the way, you will find that emerald which I showed you on the first night of our arrival in this house. The purpose of this chamber was in the time of the abbots, I do not know, and perhaps it is as well not to inquire, though they also may have used it to store their wealth.

"How can we save ourselves by crawling here like rats in a wall?" I asked of Molina. "Doubtless the secret of the hidden place is known to those who live in the house and they will drag us out and butcher us."

"The woman Luisa says it is known to none except herself, and she declares that not two months ago she discovered it for the first time by the accident of the broom with which she was sweeping the floor, striking against the springs of the panel. I will let us come out for a while, for it is not yet 11 o'clock, and she says that there will be no danger until after midnight."

"Has she any plan for our escape?" I asked.

"She has a plan, though she is doubtful of its success. When the murderers have been put to bed, she will think either that we are wizards or that we have made our way out of the house, and will search no more till dawn. Meanwhile, she will lead us to the chapel, whence she thinks we may fly to the forest."

"Where is this secret entrance, Molina?"

"I do not know, lord, she had no time to tell me, but the murderers will come by it. She said, however, that she believed that a man and a woman are imprisoned near the chapel, though she knows nothing of them and never visits the place, because the Indians who are Zibabai and his daughter, so that if you live to come so far you may find them there and speak with them."

"Why do you say 'if you live'?" Molina asked.

"Because I think, lord, that then I shall be already dead; at least, dead waits on me."

"What do you mean?" asked the senior.

"I will tell you. After the woman Luisa had gone, I ate the food she brought me and drank some wine. Then I think that I fell asleep, for when I awoke the candles had burned out and it was in darkness. Hastily I turned to search for another candle that I placed by the bottle, and was about to make fire when I saw a pair of eyes, causing me to look up.

"This is what I saw: At the far end of the chamber, enshroued in a film of such pale light as is given by the firefly, stood the figure of a man and a woman, both dressed as I am now. There I stood surrounded by faint fire, and though the face was the face of a dead man, yet the hand was not dead, for it reached toward me through the darkness."

"Now I saw, and the cold sweat of fear broke out upon me, so that I could scarcely light the candle which I held. At length, however, I burned brightly, and holding it over my head, I walked toward the spot where I had seen the figure, only to find that it was gone."

"Or, in other words, that you had seen off your own shadow, as the senior congratulated you on getting rid of it so soon."

"It is easy to track," answered Molina, "but that which I have seen I have seen, and I am not a portend to my death. Well, so be it. I am not yet old, but I have lived long enough, and now it is time to go. May heaven have mercy on my sins, and so let it be."

After this he seemed to be about to reason him out of this folly, but in vain, for in fact was it altogether a folly, seeing that he was doomed to die upon the morrow, and he was about to see the face of a dead man, and his fate, or was but a dream, it is not for me to say.

Presently we ceased talking of ghosts and demons, for we must look to our own bodies, and the first of the hour. Some minutes before midnight we extinguished the light, and, creeping one by one through the hole in the paneling, closed behind us and took our stand in the little dungeon. Here the darkness was awful, and as the warmth of the wine we had drunk passed from our veins our fears gathered thick upon us and oppressed our souls. Those hours on the sinking ship had been evil, but what were they compared to this?

Deep as was the silence, yet there were noises in it, strange creaks and flutters that thrilled our marrow. We prayed till we were weary, and then, for my part, I tried to do only so much as to think of a time when I was worse than wicker, for my imagination people, it with visions that it seemed to me that all the painted horrors on the walls of the chamber took life and enacted themselves before my eyes.

I heard the growling of the mariners, and the cruel jeers of those who would not give their arms to be used against those whose picture hung above us. Then the vision changed, and I seemed to see the tragedy of the two Americans, of whose fate the senior had told me, whose blood had stained the floor. The darkness opened

FREE PROPERTY.

Simple and Sensible Regulations That Prevent Scandals.

RUN ON BUSINESS METHODS.

NO POLITICAL MACHINE CONTROLS THE GUARDIANS OF THE PEACE.

Handling the Social Evil—The Rights of Every Citizen, No Matter How Low as High, Are Regarded With More Respect in Nonpartisan England Than in Democratic America.

[From a Special Correspondent of the New York Press.]

London, Sept. 3.—While New York is being and bubbling over with indignation against the police, the London police are doing their best to be comforting to it to reflect that while its officers of the law are many of them disreputable thieves, they are still efficient officers of the law. London's police may be honest, but, alas! they are so stupid as to almost nullify their virtues.

The entire protective force of London is divided into two distinct bodies, known respectively as the metropolitan police and the local police. Here is a specimen of the metropolitan police, the most important department by two bodies of men under distinct and independent control, while they are created for and devoted to the same purpose, the security of the city. The metropolitan police is divided into two distinct bodies, known respectively as the metropolitan police and the local police. Here is a specimen of the metropolitan police, the most important department by two bodies of men under distinct and independent control, while they are created for and devoted to the same purpose, the security of the city.

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